

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4904

May 7, 2009

The Honorable Hillary R. Clinton
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

I am writing in regard to recent statements made by the Acting State Department Spokesperson regarding Pakistani support for militants. At a press conference on May 6, 2009, the Spokesperson was asked: "Have you also received assurances from the Pakistanis about the levels of infiltration in ISI among or by terrorist or extremist elements? Have they – have the Pakistanis given you any assurances about the problem or that – being contained in that sense?" The following response was provided:

"They have basically given us assurances that there are no elements in ISI who are cooperating with the militants and extremists. We take them at their word. You know, this is – as I said, the challenge that Pakistan faces on the security front is an immense one, and it cannot afford to have rogue elements of the military, of ISI, working counter to what it is they're trying to achieve on the security front. And so, you know, we have no reason to doubt what Pakistan has said."

I find this response troubling. While I support efforts to work with the Government of Pakistan against the growing militant threat, I believe that such an unqualified acceptance of Pakistan's public statements both undermines our own credibility and impedes efforts to develop a candid relationship with Islamabad. The American people are entitled to a frank assessment of the serious national security challenges we face, in Pakistan and around the world.

Sincerely,



Russell D. Feingold
United States Senator